

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION GUIDE VAIHCS

(VA Illiana Health Care System)



“To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan.”
- Abraham Lincoln

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Congratulations and thank you for choosing VA Illiana Health Care System as the place of your new employment. We are pleased that you chose a career at VAIHCS and that you will become a part of the VA's proud tradition that provides the highest quality of service to those men and women who have served our Nation. We have a very important mission here at VAIHCS; the privilege of serving our Nation's heroes, our Veterans.

This handbook provides an introduction to VA and its human resources policies, regulations, and benefits. It is to be used only as a source of general information and should not be considered definitive guidance since the policies, regulations, and benefits it describes may occasionally be revised or superseded. This handbook does not create any rights or obligations on the part of VA or any employee. Information concerning changes in Department or facility policies may be found at VA's Internet home page, located at <http://www.va.gov> and at VA's Office of Human Resources Management Intranet Web page, <http://vaww.va.gov/Ohrm/>. If you have specific questions about how these policies affect you, see your supervisor or your local Human Resources representatives. Employees covered by a collective bargaining unit are also advised to refer to their respective labor management agreements for additional information on subjects contained in this handbook. In all cases involving matters covered by this handbook, the relevant statutes, regulations, and statements of official VA policy shall prevail.

DID YOU KNOW THAT VA.....

- Is the second largest of the 15 Cabinet departments?
- Pays out most of its budget in checks directly to veterans and their dependents?
- Serves as a backup to the Department of Defense medical system during national security contingencies and as a Federal support organization for the Federal Response Plan during catastrophic disasters?
- Has facilities in all 50 states; Washington, DC; Puerto Rico; U.S. Virgin Islands; Guam; and the Philippines?
- Has a workforce of approximately 278, 565* employees, making it the Government's second largest civilian employer?
- Has guaranteed more than 16 million home loans?
- Operates one of the world's largest life insurance programs?
- Still pays benefits to approximately 695 dependents and beneficiaries of Spanish-American War veterans?
- Developed and implanted the first cardiac pacemaker?
- Has received frequent international recognition including Nobel Prize awards to VA employees for work in hypertension, organ transplants, mental illness, spinal cord injury, and alcoholism?
- Has administered GI Bill programs providing assistance to more than 20 million veterans and service members?

*as of September 30, 2008

I. The Department of Veterans Affairs

BACKGROUND

In early America, the Colonies gave benefits to those injured in military service. In fact, the first Colonial law, which was enacted in 1636 by the Pilgrims of Plymouth, provided that "if any man shall be sent forth as a soldier and shall return maimed, he shall be maintained competently by the colony during his life."

The Continental Congress in 1776 sought to encourage enlistments during the Revolution by providing pensions for those who became disabled. The U.S. Government paid benefits to veterans of the American Revolution and their dependents until 1911.

During the Civil War, in his second inaugural address in 1865, President Abraham Lincoln called upon Congress and the American people "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan." This is VA's mission. When America entered World War I in 1917, Congress established a new system of veteran's benefits. This system included programs of disability compensation, insurance, a family allotment program for servicemen, and vocational rehabilitation.

The establishment of the Veterans Administration came in 1930 when Congress authorized the President to "consolidate and coordinate government activities affecting war veterans." Three separate Federal agencies administering veteran's benefits at that time then became component bureaus within VA. More than 4.7 million veterans were served by the newly created agency with its comparatively small staff of 31,500 employees and 54 hospitals.

During World War II, a gigantic expansion of VA facilities quickly became necessary not only because of the vast increase in the veteran population, but also because of the large number of new benefits enacted by the Congress. The World War II "GI Bill" for educational benefits, signed into law June 22, 1944, is said to have had more impact on the American way of life than any law since passage of the Homestead Act almost a century before.

The Korean conflict, Vietnam era service, and the Persian Gulf war added more veterans to the veteran population and new benefits and services. In 1999, the number of estimated veterans was 24.8 million. The number of hospitals devoted to caring for America's veterans grew enormously, from VA's original 54 to 176, plus nearly 1,000 clinics, nursing homes, domiciliaries, and vet centers by more than 183,000 employees. Today, VA also has programs for pension, housing, and burial. Nearly 12,000 employees serve across 57 regional benefit offices and over 1,200 employees provide services at 119 national cemeteries.

In addition to its vast network of health care facilities, VA operates an outstanding medical research program that has made significant progress in improving rehabilitation for veterans and in the treatment of numerous health problems for the entire population. VA is a world leader in such areas as research on aging, women veterans' health issues, AIDS, and post-

traumatic stress disorder. VA researchers have played key roles in eradicating tuberculosis; improving artificial limbs; and developing the CT scan and magnetic resonance imaging, which facilitates safe removal of brain tumors. VA contributions to medical knowledge have won VA scientists many prestigious awards, including two Nobel Prizes.

In 1989, the Department of Veterans Affairs was established as the successor to the Veterans Administration. Headed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, VA provides the world's most comprehensive and diverse programs of benefits for veterans and dependents. Also in 1989, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims began operation as an independent federal court to which veterans can appeal decisions about benefits claims and entitlements.

VA is also taking a leading role in the development of services and programs to provide assistance to the special needs of women, minority, and homeless veterans.

MISSION

VA Illiana Health Care System exists to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

VISION

VA Illiana Health Care System will strive to be a patient-centered integrated healthcare organization for veterans providing excellent health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner; and a back-up for National emergencies.

CORE VALUES: INTEGRITY, COMMITMENT, ADVOCACY, RESPECT, AND EXCELLENCE (I -CARE)

- Integrity - Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.
- Commitment - Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.
- Advocacy - Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.
- Respect - Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.
- Excellence - Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

STRATEGIC GOALS

RESTORE

- Restore the capability of disabled veterans to the greatest extent possible and improve the quality of their lives and that of their families

TRANSITION

- Ensure a smooth transition for veterans from active military service to civilian life

HONOR AND SERVE

- Honor and serve veterans in life and memorialize them in death for their sacrifices on behalf of the Nation

CONTRIBUTE

- Contribute to the public health, socioeconomic well-being, and history of the Nation

CREATE

- Create an environment that fosters the delivery of One VA world-class service to veterans and their families through effective communication and management of people, technology, business processes, and financial resources

ONE VA TRANSFORMATION

VA recognizes that high quality, seamless service to the Nation's veterans is dependent upon VA operating as "one" unified organization. While in reality only one Department exists, VA primarily is organizationally structured and budgeted into three Administrations –health care, nonmedical entitlement benefits, and memorial affairs. Ninety-eight percent of VA's 220,000+ employees are assigned within one of these areas to provide direct services to veterans and their families at field facilities dispersed throughout all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Philippines, and Guam. The vision of One VA depends on dedicated VA employees across the Department, committed to working in a cooperative manner together and with Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), State Departments of Veterans Affairs, U. S. Congress, General Accounting Office, Office of Management and Budget, and other agencies with programs affecting veterans.

The theme behind the vision is One VA – One Mission, One Vision, One Voice. The focus is on educating all employees on VA's singular mission and its benefits and services, in addition to providing the tools to direct veterans to the appropriate source to reduce numerous hand-offs and eliminate organizational stovepipes. It is important to remember veterans do not see VA as a health care system separated from a benefits system and independent of a national cemetery system.

VA is implementing a series of strategies and actions that continue this cultural transformation so every employee will think and act as One VA. This implementation supports the Department's strategic goal to "provide One VA world-class service to veterans and their

families through the effective management of people, technology, processes, and financial resources.” VA is most successful in meeting its organizational goals when it creates effective internal and external partnerships that promote shared accountability for all results as One VA.

ADMINISTRATION

VA's numerous non-medical benefit programs are administered by the **Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)**, headed by the Under Secretary for Benefits. These benefit programs include education, compensation and pension, vocational rehabilitation, insurance, and loan guaranty. VBA's field system consists primarily of a nationwide network of regional offices whose activities are administered by nine virtual Service Delivery Networks (SDN).

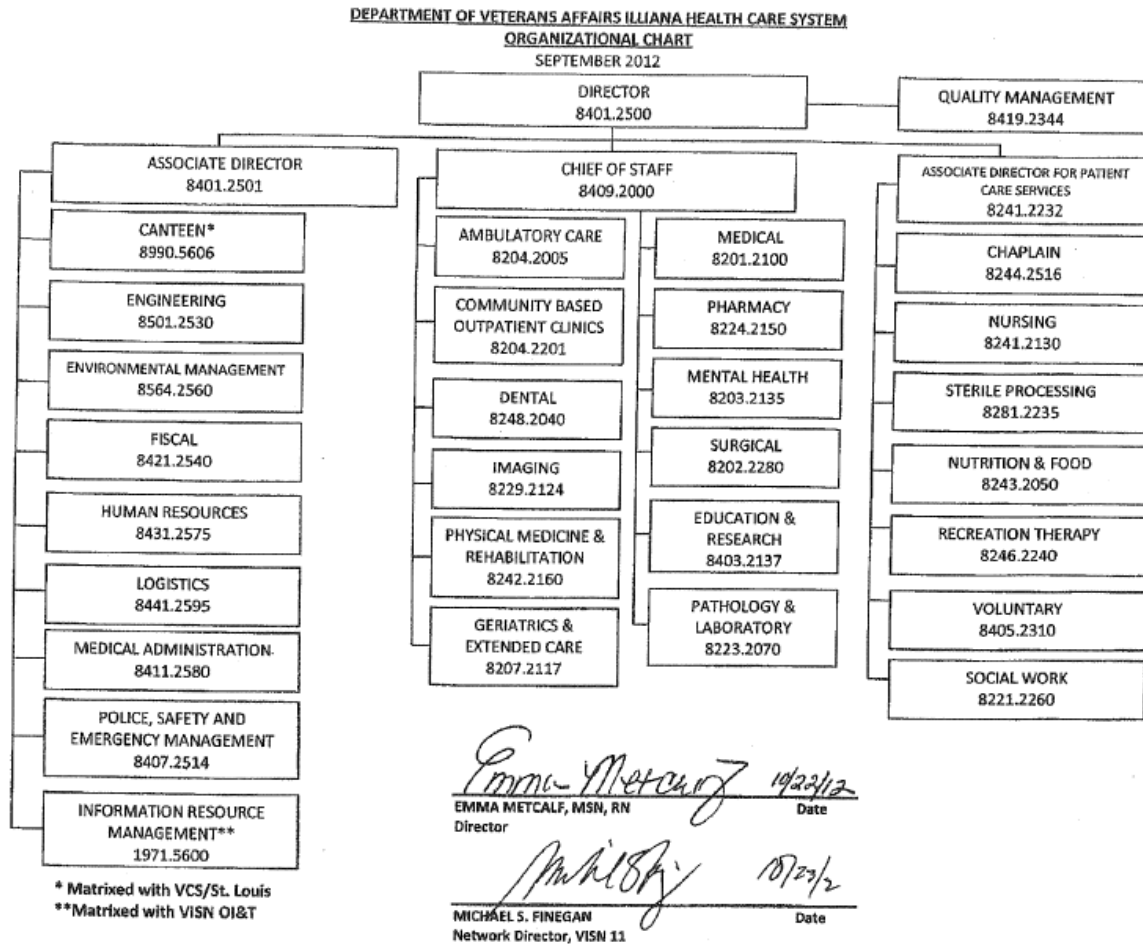
Health care is the primary responsibility of the **Veterans Health Administration (VHA)**, headed by the Under Secretary for Health. VA administers a nationwide system of hospitals, clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing care units through 22 Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) offices. It also monitors and supports an ongoing medical research program dedicated to seeking cures and improved treatments for conditions affecting veterans, but which are often pertinent to the general population as well.

The **National Cemetery Administration (NCA)**, headed by the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, is responsible for the operation of all national cemeteries and miscellaneous burial plots administered by VA through five Memorial Service Network (MSN) offices. VA also procures and distributes headstones and markers for eligible decedents who are buried in national and private cemeteries and administers the Presidential Memorial Certificate Program.

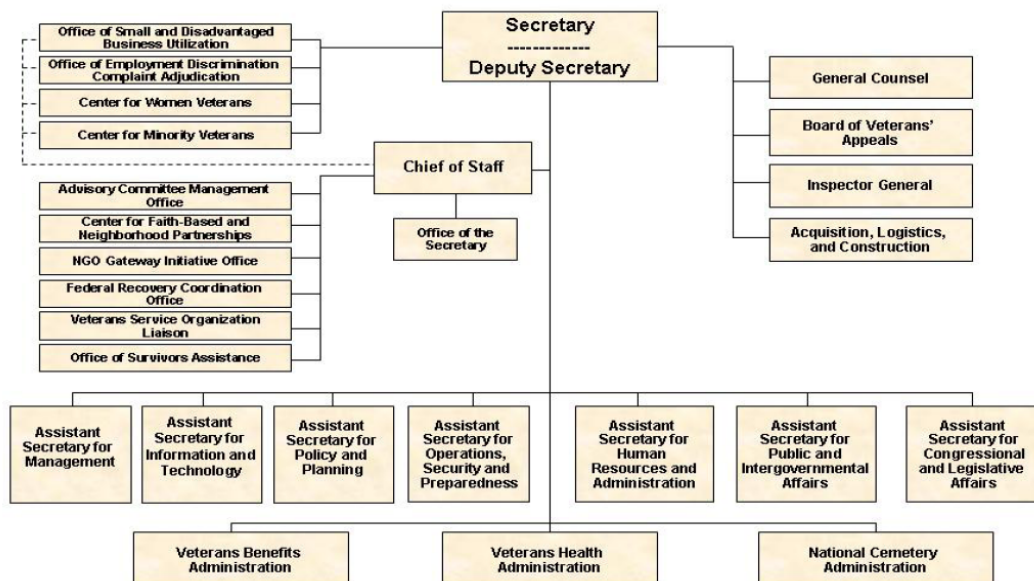
VA CENTRAL OFFICE (CO)

The offices of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and the three Administration Under Secretaries are located in VA Central Office (VACO) in Washington, DC. The responsibilities and programs of these offices, in turn, are supported by the offices of six Assistant Secretaries overseeing Departmental public and intergovernmental affairs, management, information and technology, human resources and administration, policy and planning, and congressional and legislative affairs. In addition, advice is provided through the offices of the General Counsel and Inspector General and resolution of appeals is furnished by the Board of Veterans' Appeals and the Board of Contract Appeals in their respective areas.

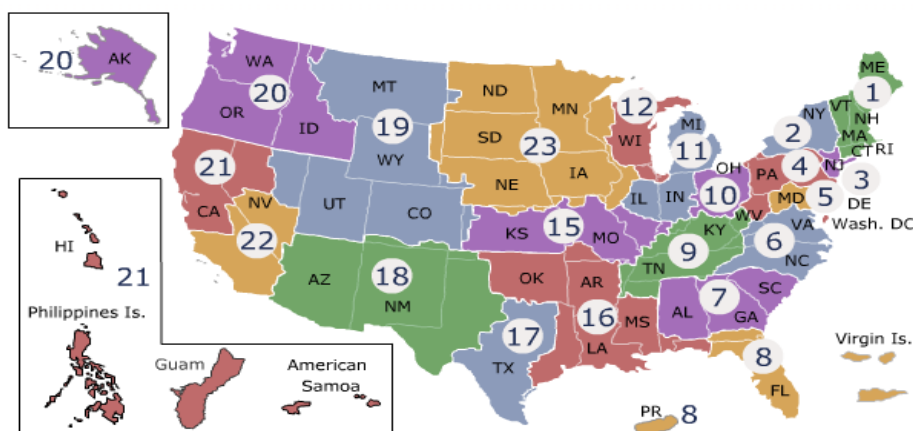
VAIHCS Facility Organizational Chart:



National Organization Chart:



MAP Veterans Health Administration (VISN) Locations:



Click on the state or the visn number for information about facilities there.

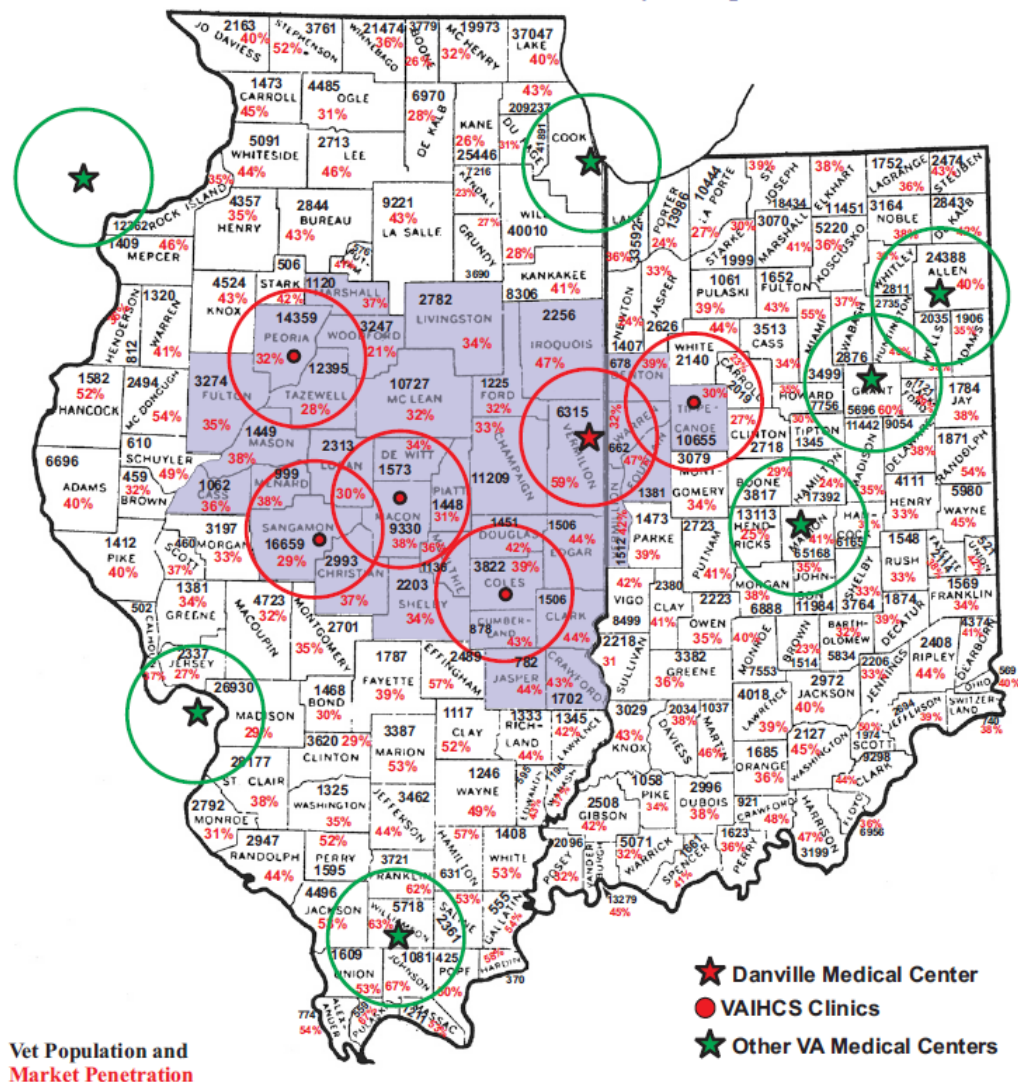
Veterans Integrated Service Networks:

VISN 1: VA New England Healthcare System	VISN 11: Veterans In Partnership
VISN 2: VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York	VISN 12: VA Great Lakes Health Care System
VISN 3: VA NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network	VISN 15: VA Heartland Network
VISN 4: VA Stars & Stripes Healthcare Network	VISN 16: South Central VA Health Care Network
VISN 5: VA Capitol Health Care Network	VISN 17: VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network
VISN 6: VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network	VISN 18: VA Southwest Health Care Network
VISN 7: The Southeast Network	VISN 19: Rocky Mountain Network
VISN 8: VA Sunshine Healthcare Network	VISN 20: Northwest Network
VISN 9: VA Mid South Healthcare Network	VISN 21: Sierra Pacific Network
VISN 10: VA Healthcare System of Ohio	VISN 22: Desert Pacific Healthcare Network
	VISN 23: VA Midwest Health Care Network

[Browse Veterans Health Administration facilities by state](#)

VA Illiana Health Care System and Surrounding VA Facilities

Numbers reflect ALL Priority Groups



VA Acronym Lookup - (<http://vaww.va.gov/acronyms/>)

The Acronym Database provides a web-enabled searchable database of acronyms used within the VA.

VA Phone Book – (<http://vaww.va.gov/PhoneBook/>)

The "White Pages" of the VA Phone Book allows users to search for any VA employee who is in the VA's Active Directory. Contact information will be displayed for those matches who happen to have a VA Exchange account. The "Yellow Pages" allows users to search for VA facilities based on data from the VA Facilities & Leadership Directory.

II. Your Appointment

TYPE OF APPOINTMENTS

An individual's appointment to a position in VA may be one of several kinds and may be full time, part time, or intermittent. The kind of appointment has a bearing on the employee's "status" and job tenure. The principal types of appointments under Civil Service include career conditional, career, temporary, Senior Executive Service, and excepted. VA has the authority to appoint physicians, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists, nurses, and other health care personnel to positions under separate Federal laws found in Title 38 of the U.S. Code. Each of these appointment authorities is described briefly below.

TITLE 5

A **career-conditional appointment** is the first step toward a career in the Federal service. If you hold this kind of appointment, the first year of your service is a probationary period and essentially an extension of the examination process under which you were appointed. During the probationary period, your appointment can be terminated without formal removal procedures for skill deficiencies, poor work habits or attitude, or unsuitability.

After you have completed 3 years of substantially continuous, creditable service as a **career-conditional** employee, your appointment automatically converts to a career appointment. This confers on you greater retention rights in the event of a reduction-in-force, priority placement if separated because of such a reduction, and reinstatement eligibility following a break in service.

Career-conditional and career employees can be promoted, reassigned, or transferred to any vacant position for which they are eligible and qualified within VA or in any other Federal agency.

Temporary appointments are made to cover particular work situations and usually have a time limitation of one year or less. Temporary appointees are not eligible for promotion, reassignment, or transfer and may be separated at any time during their appointment.

Excepted appointments are made to positions that have been specifically excluded from competitive requirements by a statute, Executive Order, or by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Candidates for excepted positions must meet appropriate qualification standards, but do not compete in civil service examinations, do not have competitive status, and serve initial trial periods.

Consultant Appointments: A well-qualified specialist in an occupation identified in 38 USC 7401 (1) or (3), who is capable of giving authoritative views and opinions on subjects in the Consultant's particular field. Such occupations include: physicians, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, and registered nurses. A Consultant's expertise may consist of broad administrative or professional experience enabling the Consultant to give advice of distinctive

value. Consultants will be employed for a fiscal year or fraction thereof, depending on the need. All appointments will expire on September 30th of each fiscal year and reappointment actions will be effected no later than October 1st of each fiscal year.

Fee Basis Appointment: Professional and technical personnel appointed on a Fee Basis under authority of 38 USC 7405 (a) (2). These individuals provide services on the facility's premises. Fee Basis will be employed for a fiscal year or fraction thereof, depending on the need. All appointments will expire on September 30th of each fiscal year and reappointment actions will be effected no later than October 1st of each fiscal year.

TITLE 38

VA has a separate employment system under Title 38 U.S.C. for appointment of Physicians, Dentists, Podiatrists, Optometrists, Nurses, Nurse Anesthetists, Physician Assistants, and Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDAs). These appointments are made on the basis of an individual's qualifications and professional attainments in accordance with standards that have been established by the Secretary. Title 38 employees are paid under specific pay schedules. Appointments may be either full-time permanent, temporary full time, part time, or intermittent. Most full-time appointments under Title 38 are subject to a 2-year probationary period. The functional statement is updated when a change in duties occurs. A functional statement is provided that spells out the duties and responsibilities.

HYBRID

Title 38 Hybrid employees are employed under a combination of both Title 5 and Title 38 personnel systems. Currently, Title 38 hybrid positions include Certified/ Registered Respiratory Therapist, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Pharmacist, and Licensed Practical/ Nurse, Nursing Assistants and Medical Support Assistants. Hybrids are covered by Title 38 for appointment, advancement, and certain pay matters, and Title 5 for performance appraisal, leave, hours of duty, adverse actions, probationary period, reemployment rights, reduction-in-force, and retirement rules (except part-time service is calculated under Title 38 retirement rules). A functional statement is provided that spells out the duties and responsibilities. The functional statement is updated when a change in duties occurs.

POSITIONS IN THE GENERAL STRUCTURE

As a **General Schedule (GS) employee**, your grade, official position title, and occupational series are determined by a process called position classification. The process starts with the development of a position description, describing the major functions of your position. Your supervisor is responsible for assigning your duties and responsibilities, writing your position description, and periodically reviewing it to ensure that it is still complete and accurate. You can assist by calling attention to any significant changes in duties or responsibilities that may have occurred since the last review. You should have a copy of your position description. If you do not have one, ask your supervisor for a copy.

Your local Human Resources Management (HRM) Office is responsible for evaluating the duties and responsibilities of your position according to a set of classification standards which are

written, published, and periodically updated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The classification process may also, but does not have to, involve an audit at your work site and discussion with your supervisor.

POSITIONS IN THE FEDERAL WAGE SYSTEM

Positions in the **Federal Wage System (FWS)** are often referred to as blue collar positions and represent the manual trades and crafts. As a FWS employee, your grade, your official title, and your occupational series are determined by a process called job grading. As with the General Schedule, the process of job grading begins with the development of a job description. Most job descriptions describe the work in terms of four factors: skill and knowledge required, level of responsibility of the job, physical effort required, and working conditions encountered. Your supervisor is responsible for assigning your work, writing your job description, and periodically reviewing it to ensure that it is still complete and accurate. You can assist by calling attention to any significant changes in your job that may have occurred since the last review. You should have a copy of your job description. If you do not have one, ask your supervisor for a copy.

After your job description is developed, it is sent to your local HRM Office. Your local HRM Office evaluates your job in relation to a set of Job Grading Standards which are published and periodically updated by OPM. As with General Schedule positions, the grading of a blue collar job may, but does not have to, involve a work site audit and discussion with your supervisor.

III. Your Job

PERSONNEL FOLDER

Your official personnel folder (OPF) contains the official papers pertaining to your employment and is the permanent record of your service in the Federal Government. It is maintained for official use only and is not open to inspection by unauthorized persons. You can access your OPF (eOPF) via OPM at this link: <https://eopf.nbc.gov/nasa/logon.aspx>.

If you believe the content of a record pertaining to you to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or incomplete, you may request that the record be changed or corrected. The request will be reviewed by the official responsible for the record. If the desired changes are not made, you will be told why. If you are not satisfied with the decision, appeal procedures are available to you. Your local Human Resources Management representatives can give you complete details.

PROBATIONARY PERIODS

The probationary period for all permanent Title 5 and Hybrid Title 38 employees is one year. The probationary period for permanent Title 38 employees is two years. The trial period is the most important part of the examining procedure. This is the period when new employees are tested on the job for qualities and characteristics essential for satisfactory performance. Employees are entitled to Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) to assist in improving performance during their probationary period.

Employees who are placed in a supervisory or managerial position in the competitive service are required to serve a 1-year probationary period.

HOURS OF DUTY

If you are a full-time employee, your tour of duty is generally 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. If you are involved in patient care or have some other job that requires extended coverage, you may be required to work other than a standard Monday through Friday tour of duty (e.g., at night or weekends). Other non-standard tours of duty, called alternative work schedules (AWS), may be approved in some work units in order to provide employees more flexibility in scheduling work. An AWS consists of either a flexible or compressed work schedule. A flexible work schedule (or flextime) means a system of work scheduling that splits the workday into two distinct kinds of time: a core time band and a flexible time band. A compressed schedule means (1) in the case of a full-time employee, an 80-hour biweekly basic work requirement that is scheduled for less than 10 workdays; and (2) in the case of a part-time employee, a biweekly basic work requirement of less than 80 hours that is scheduled for less than 10 workdays and that may require the employee to work more than 8 hours in a day.

All employees are required to be on duty during the full period of their tour of duty unless absent on approved leave; to observe the opening and closing hours established for the tour of duty; and to adhere to the established luncheon period.

Inpatient care is delivered 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. Outpatient care is in operation Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Medical Officer of the Day (MOD) in Urgent Care Clinic evaluates patients who present for care during non-administrative hours. The same level of care and treatment is provided after hours as is during normal operating (administrative) hours. Patients may access the toll-free Telephone Triage Nurse 24/7 program after hours.

The Peoria Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Tuesday's 6:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., and Saturday's from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. All other CBOC's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

LUNCH PERIODS

Thirty-minute, shall be designated for each tour of duty. Lunch periods are not considered as official duty for which pay is due.

When three shifts are in operation it may not be practical to permit a regular lunch period. For employees on this shift, they may be permitted to eat lunch on the job if it is possible to do so without interrupting their work assignments and responsibilities. Employees are paid for their lunch period when scheduled to work through their lunch period.

Lunch periods will not be scheduled less than three hours after a tour begins nor less than three hours before a tour ends. Supervisors must be prepared to justify deviation from this rule upon request. Under no circumstances will a lunch period be scheduled at the beginning nor ending of a tour. Breaks are not to be combined with lunch periods to extend the lunch period.

For additional information see [MCM 05-20 Tours of Duty](#).

BREAKS

All full-time, non-exempt employees are permitted two fifteen-minute rest breaks per day at times determined by the employee and supervisor, with one fifteen-minute break to be taken in the morning and one in the afternoon. Breaks should be staggered to avoid disrupting the operations of any department. Breaks are not permitted at either the beginning or end of the work day to offset arrival and departure times, nor may they be added to the lunch break. Employees who voluntarily work through their break periods will not be permitted additional compensation.

IDENTIFICATION BADGE

VA Illiana Health Care System (VAIHCS) will provide photo identification (ID) name badges for all employees, volunteers, contractors, students, Without Compensation (WOC) appointees, and VA Work-Study participants. ID badges will expire no later than three years after issuance date. Please see [MCM 05-66 Personal Identification Verification \(PIV\)](#) for personal identity verification standards and identification credentialing requirements.

WORK INJURIES

VA will provide you with a safe and healthy place to work and with approved protective and safety equipment as necessary to protect you from hazardous working conditions. You are required to observe established safe practices and to report unsafe conditions to your supervisor. **(See section titled "Occupational Safety and Health.")**

If you are injured at work, notify your supervisor immediately. You should review the [pamphlet CA-11](#), "When Injured At Work," for more information on this subject.

ACCIDENT REPORTING

Employee must decide whether or not to file a FECA claim for work-related incident and completes the appropriate claim form in ASISTS: CA-1, Notice of Traumatic Injury – used when an employee sustains a traumatic injury in performance of duty within a single day or work shift; or CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease - used when an employee claims an occupational disease produced in the work environment over a period longer than one workday or shift. After employee and supervisor have completed the CA-1 or CA-2 in ASISTS, the form must be printed and signed in BLUE ink by the supervisor, employee and any witnesses listed on the form and delivered to the facility WC staff by the employee.

Employee elects who will provide medical care and treatment. Election made by the employee for medical treatment by OHU, primary care physician or personal physician. Employee must keep the supervisor informed of current status. This includes providing the supervisor with acceptable written medical documentation listing specific physical limitations and restrictions, if any; resulting from a job related injury, so that limited duty may be identified, when appropriate.

Employee is responsible for returning to duty when offered duties that are consistent with their attending physician's determination of limitations and restrictions.

Employee must request leave in accordance with appropriate procedures to cover all absences necessitated by a work-related injury or illness.

For further information see [MCM 05-23 Work-Related Injury or Occupational Disease](#).

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to assist employees with a variety of personal, emotional, mental, legal, or family concerns they may be experiencing.

Because we recognize that job performance may be negatively affected by stressful personal, emotional, mental, financial, legal or family concerns, many VA facilities have expanded their counseling programs to assist employees with these problems.

For additional information see [MCM 05-45 Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) or visit the EAP Website at <https://guidanceresources.com/groWeb/login/login.xhtml>

CHAPLAIN SERVICE

Although we are not all religious, we are all spiritual with our personal beliefs and values. Chaplains integrate spiritual health care with other disciplines to facilitate healing and a greater sense of well-being. Health involves the spiritual dynamics of wholeness of body, mind, emotion and spirit. Healing is possible in every circumstance, even when cure is not possible.

Chaplains - Danville VA Medical Center:

- ❖ Thomas H. Mills, M.Div., BCC, Church of God (Cleveland, TN) – Chief of Chaplains – Thomas.Mills@va.gov, Pager 474
- ❖ Brian Manigold, M.Div., BCC, United Methodist – Full Time Staff Chaplain – Brian.Manigold@va.gov, Pager 682
- ❖ Marcus Bell, M.Div., BCC, Baptist – Part Time Staff Chaplain – Marcus.Bell3@va.gov, Pager 710
- ❖ Lael Dixon, M.Div., BCC, Free Methodist – Intermittent Staff Chaplain – Lael.Dixon@va.gov, Pager 592
- ❖ Ronald Ziemer, M.Div., BCC, United Church of Christ – Intermittent Staff Chaplain – Ronald.Ziemer@va.gov, Pager 558
- ❖ Kenneth Conklin, M.Div., Presbyterian – Intermittent Staff Chaplain – Kenneth.Conklin2@va.gov, Pager 520

Spiritual care is available through CBOC appointment via video tele-health. For paging and after hours, contact Switchboard Operator 217 554-3000.

Upon request:

- Spiritual care literature
- Spiritual care support available at Danville VA Medical Center or by phone

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Purpose

The VA Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) is a child care tuition assistance program that is available to eligible VA employees.

Eligible Employees

All full-time and part-time VA employees who meet the salary criteria are eligible.

Application Procedures for CCSP:

The application process for the CCSP has transitioned from a paper application process to an automated system. The Child Care Records Management System (CCRMS) gives employees the ability to apply for program eligibility on-line using their VA Network Identification (NT ID). After submitting the application and required documents on-line, participants must send an email to their local HR office requesting an application review. The local servicing HR office will

review and submit all applications to **OHRM, VA Child Care Subsidy Program** through the CCRMS. To start the on-line CCSP application process, visit: <https://vaww.CCRMS.va.gov/>.

Additional information can be obtained through the CCSP website at
<http://vaww1.va.gov/ohrm/ccsp/index.htm>

IV. Your Pay

SALARY

The pay you receive depends on the pay system that applies to you: General Schedule (GS), Federal Wage System (FWS), Title 38; Locality Pay System; or Veterans Canteen Service (VCS).

PAY PERIODS, PAY DAYS, AND DIRECT DEPOSIT OF SALARY PAYMENTS

Pay periods are 2 weeks long; they begin on Sunday and end on Saturday. You are paid every other Friday, and must be paid by direct deposit to your financial institution and usually are in your account on the Friday of pay day. [PAID CALENDARS](#)

DEDUCTIONS

Along with your salary, you will receive an earnings and leave statement each pay period that will show your annual and sick leave balances and the amount of each kind of deduction from your gross pay. Some of these deductions are required, while others are optional. The amount withheld for Federal and applicable state income taxes depends on your gross earnings and the number of exemptions you claim. Employees are encouraged to sign up for [myPay](#) to access their earnings and leave statements. [myPay](#) gives users 24-hour access to their pay statements and tax information online and even allows you to make changes to certain aspects of pay and investment accounts. Best of all, [myPay](#) is convenient and easy to use. It offers government employees an alternative to paper statements and eliminates the need to file forms and write letters to handle payroll matters. Employees are also encouraged to turn off hard copy receipt of earnings and leave statements.

Deductions are also made if you elect coverage under the Federal Employees group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program or one of the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plans.

You may also authorize deductions from your salary for the purchase of U.S. Savings Bonds, for your pledge to combined charity drives, for the payment of dues to recognized labor organizations, for deposit to such financial institutions as banks, savings and loan associations, and credit unions, and for other purposes. If there is a significant, unexplained change in the amount of your salary payment, you should contact the payroll office.

To turn off your Leave Earning Statements (LES):

Log in to [myPay](#). Click on section Turn on/off Hard Copy of LES and follow the prompts.



PERIODIC STEP OR WITHIN-GRADE INCREASES

If you are in one of the following pay systems and remain in the same grade, you will receive periodic pay raises as long as your performance meets the appropriate criteria, you meet the required service, and you have not reached the maximum rate of the grade. General Schedule (GS) includes Permanent Title 5 and Title 38 Hybrid.

- After 52 calendar weeks of creditable service in steps 1, 2, and 3; and
- After 104 calendar weeks of creditable service in steps 4, 5, and 6; and
- After 156 calendar weeks of creditable service in steps 7, 8, and 9.

Federal Wage System (FWS)

- After 26 calendar weeks of creditable service in step 1;
- After 78 calendar weeks of creditable service in step 2; and
- After 104 calendar weeks of creditable service in steps 3.

Title 38

- 104 calendar week waiting period, except as noted below.
- 52 calendar week waiting period for expanded-function dental auxiliaries and associate grade physician assistants in steps 1 and 2 of the regular rate range. RNs at NI, LI advancement to steps 2 through 4; at NI, LII advancement to steps 4 through 7; NI, LIII advancement to steps 6 through 8 after 52 weeks of creditable service. Periodic step and within-grade increases begin on the first day of the first pay period after you meet all of the above requirements.

Direct Deposit, Tax Withholding, and myPay Information

VHA Directive 4112, Direct Deposit/Electronic Funds Transfer Participation Policy effective January 1, 1995, required all new employees hired on or after January 1, 1995, to have their salary checks direct deposited to a financial institution. If you have not received the Direct

Deposit and State and Federal tax forms from Human Resources, you can get them in the Payroll Department.

Direct Deposit information is made available to financial institutions on Thursday evening preceding direct deposit on the following Friday. Some banks post the deposits on Friday, others may not. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK WITH YOUR FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TO DETERMINE WHEN YOUR PAY IS AVAILABLE.** Please attach a voided check or a deposit slip to the completed direct deposit form to ensure that your financial institution's routing number and your account number are entered correctly into the Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS). If these numbers are incorrect, the financial institution that receives your direct deposit may return the payment to DFAS. If this occurs, the deposit of your check will be delayed. If you are unsure how to complete the direct deposit or tax withholding forms, a Payroll Technician can assist you. Direct deposit forms and tax withholding forms should be turned into the Payroll Department, Building 102, Room 101D, by the second Wednesday of the pay period. Link: [Direct Deposit Form](#)

Employees may have their check deposited into seven (7) separate accounts, called allotments, in addition to the direct deposit account for net pay. A routing number and account number are required for the establishment of an allotment. Allotment information can be entered in section 4 of the Direct Deposit Form.

As a convenience to employees the VA offers a self-service option called myPay, <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. myPay allows employees to make changes to personal information such as direct deposits, tax withholdings, address changes, allotments, etc. Leave and Earning Statements as well as W-2s can also be printed from myPay. After an e-mail address is established in the Outlook System for an employee, myPay will send the employee a temporary password. At this time, the employee should create a permanent password. The temporary password sent by myPay will expire in approximately 10 days, so it is important for employees to create their permanent password as soon as possible. Employees having problems gaining access to myPay may call or come into the Payroll Department or call the myPay Customer Service number 1-888-332-7411.

Payroll staff can be contacted at 217-554-3000, extensions 45922, 45920, 45029, or 45929. Payroll e-mail addresses are g.payroll in the VISTA System or VHADAN Payroll in the Outlook System.

V. Your Leave Benefits

LEAVE SYSTEMS - [General Schedule \(GS\)](#), [Federal Wage System \(FWS\)](#), and [Veterans Canteen Service \(VCS\)](#)

ANNUAL LEAVE

As a Federal employee, you earn annual leave for vacations and other personal uses. The amount of annual leave you earn each year depends on your length of service (Federal employment and military service).

Employee Type	<i>Less than 3 years of service*</i>	<i>3 years but less than 15 years of service*</i>	<i>15 or more years of service*</i>
Full-time employees	½ day (4 hours) for each pay period	¾ day (6 hours) for each pay period, except 1¼ day (10 hours) in last pay period	1 day (8 hours) for each pay period
Part-time employees	1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status	1 hour for each 13 hours in a pay status	1 hour for each 10 hours in a pay status
Uncommon tours of duty	(4 hours) times (average # of hours per biweekly pay period) divided by 80 = biweekly accrual rate.	(6 hours) times (average # of hours per biweekly pay period) divided by 80 = biweekly accrual rate.**	(8 hours) times (average # of hours per biweekly pay period) divided by 80 = biweekly accrual rate.

“Use or Lose” Annual Leave

“Use or lose” annual leave is the amount of annual leave that is in excess of the employee's applicable annual leave ceiling. Any accrued annual leave in excess of the maximum allowed by law will be forfeited if not used by the final day of the leave year. Forfeited annual leave may be restored under 5 U.S.C. 6304(d). (See [Restoration of Annual Leave fact sheet](#).)

Unused annual leave at the end of the year may be accumulated for use in succeeding years, up to a maximum of **240 hours**. (Part-time employees’ maximum leave accumulation limit is prorated in accordance with their work schedule).

If you leave the Federal service, you will be paid for annual leave to your credit.

SICK LEAVE

There is no limitation on the amount of sick leave that can be accumulated.

Purpose:

- For personal needs when the employee is incapacitated for duty by physical or mental illness, pregnancy or childbirth;
- For bereavement and to care for a family member (subject to regulatory limits);
- To care for a family member with a serious health condition (subject to regulatory limits);
- For adoption purposes (subject to regulatory limits);

- Due to exposure to a communicable disease when the employee or their family member's presence in the community would jeopardize the health of others.

Earning Rates:

Sick Leave Accrual	
Full-time employees	1/2 day (4 hours) for each biweekly pay period
Part-time employees	1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status
Uncommon tours of duty	(4 hours) times (average # of hours per biweekly pay period) divided by 80 = biweekly accrual rate

VOLUNTARY LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM

If the need arises and you have exhausted your leave, you may request to become a leave recipient through the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. The leave transfer program allows you to receive annual leave donated by another employee if you have a medical emergency and you have exhausted your available paid leave. This program applies to both Title 5 and Title 38 employees. More information is available by contacting Lana Foley, Human Resources (05), Building 102, Room 110D, by phone or fax (217) 554-5952; fax (217) 554-4585 and or by email Lana.Foley@va.gov.

PREGNANCY/CHILDBIRTH

A pregnant employee who must be absent from work at some point before giving birth for her own health or that of her unborn child is entitled to use sick leave. An employee is also entitled to use sick leave to care for a family member who is incapacitated because of pregnancy or childbirth, or to accompany her to prenatal care appointments. According to the definition of serious health condition, any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or childbirth, or for prenatal care, is considered a serious health condition, even if the employee or family member does not receive active treatment from a health care provider during the period of incapacity or the period of incapacity does not last more than 3 consecutive calendar days. Sick leave may be used for medical examinations and during the period of incapacitation for delivery and recuperation. Once the period of incapacitation is over, there is no entitlement to use sick leave. There is no provision in law or regulation that permits the use of sick leave to be absent from work to care for a healthy newborn, bond with a healthy child, or for other child care responsibilities.

Please see our fact sheet entitled [Leave and Work Scheduling Flexibilities Available for Childbirth](#) for more information.

MILITARY LEAVE

An employee is entitled to time off at full pay for certain types of active or inactive duty in the National Guard or as a Reserve of the Armed Forces (Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard).

Coverage: Any full-time Federal civilian employee whose appointment is not limited to 1 year is entitled to military leave. Military leave under 5 U.S.C. 6323(a) is prorated for part-time career employees and employees on an uncommon tour of duty. Please see our fact sheet entitled [Military Leave](#) for more information.

ANNUAL LEAVE (TITLE 38 EMPLOYEES)

Eligible Employees:

- ✓ Full-time or part-time work schedules
- ✓ Appointment expected to last 90 days or more or have been continuously employed for at least 90 days under one or more appointments

Earning Rates:

Annual Leave Accrual	
Full-time Physician, Dentist, Podiatrist, Chiropractor and Optometrist	26 days earned each leave year
Full-time RN, ARNP, Nurse Anesthetist, 7306 Appointees, Physician Assistant and Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliary:	8 hours earned each pay period
Part-time Title 38 Employees	1 hour of annual leave earned for each 10 hours in a pay status

SICK LEAVE (Title 38 Employees)

There is no limitation on the amount of sick leave that can be accumulated.

Sick Leave Accrual	
Full-time Physicians, Dentists, Podiatrists, Chiropractors and Optometrists	13 calendar days earned each leave year
Full-time Nurses, Nurse Anesthetists, Physician's Assistant and Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries	4 hours earned each pay period
Part-time Title 38 employees	1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status
Uncommon tours of duty	(4 hours) times (average # of hours per biweekly pay period) divided by 80 = biweekly accrual rate

Eligible Employees:

- ✓ Full-time or part-time work schedules
- ✓ Appointments expected to last 90 days or more or have been continuously employed for at least 90 days under one or more appointments

HOLIDAYS

The following are legal holidays for Federal employees.

New Year's Day	January 1
Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.	3rd Monday in January
Washington's Birthday	3rd Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	1st Monday in September
Columbus Day	2 nd Monday in October
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	4 th Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

VI. Your Career

In order to become a more customer-focused organization, functioning as One VA and delivering seamless service to our customers, we must cultivate a dedicated workforce of highly skilled employees who understand, believe in, and take pride in VA's vitally important mission. This vision supports the Department's commitment to investing in human capital and building a culture of continuous learning within the organization. That means recruiting, developing and retaining a competent, committed, diverse workforce recognized for providing high-quality care and service to our veterans.

TRAINING

The training you receive in VA is an important part of making sure VA has a highly qualified and highly motivated workforce. Training is necessary to maintain, enhance and expand skills and capabilities, to continue to meet the needs of America's veterans and their dependents, and to provide employees a chance to grow and develop.

The [VA Learning University \(VALU\)](#) provides leadership for learning initiatives spanning the three VA administrations, and all VA staff offices. VALU coordinates the various educational entities within VA to maximize educational resources through collaborative efforts, and facilitates internal and external learning partnerships.

VALU operates on the premise that learning is a strategic force within an organization, and that it should be the business of every employee to seize learning opportunities to enhance job skills and realize personal potential. A variety of learning modalities are offered to you by VALU (correspondence, classroom, or satellites), so you can select one that best suits your learning style and needs.

Training in VA has two main goals. First of all, you will get the training you need to help you do your present job in an effective, productive way. Most of this training will be given on the job by your supervisor, who has the primary responsibility for deciding what training you need. However, he or she can use your help to make these decisions. Therefore, you should discuss your training needs and any goals you have with your supervisor. Occasionally, you may be sent to a class to learn additional skills.

In addition, you may be given training to help prepare you for future duties and responsibilities. This will depend on what skills VA needs in the future, available resources, and your own goals and initiative.

Your training and development are important to VA. Meeting VA's strategic objectives requires training geared to both VA's needs and your goals. As your employer, VA can give you help with your development, but the Department cannot do it all for you. VA can encourage you and provide developmental opportunities, but your development depends on your own desire to learn and advance.

Educational Opportunities in VHA

VHA sponsors a wide variety of educational opportunities to ensure an adequate supply of health professionals for VA and the Nation. VHA employees receive training and education to improve effectiveness and productivity. It is VHA's goal that 50 percent of full-time employees receive 40 hours of continuing education or training each year; and that all frontline providers have, as part of the 40 hours, 20 hours directly related to patient safety.

VHA has its **Succession Planning Committee**, which is charged with developing a well-defined, comprehensive succession plan for VHA. This group links the succession plan to the High Performance Development Model and ensures that the plan addresses workforce assessment, defines career tracks, and identifies required skill sets, recruitment and retention strategies, and comprehensive leadership and staff development training.

The **Employee Education System (EES)**, VHA's education and training organization, specializes in providing quality products and services for continuous learning and performance improvement. EES programs keep pace with the profound changes affecting VA and those who care for our Nation's veterans.

EES has expanded its role from serving primarily as a provider of education to providing leadership in partnering with its customers to meet the educational needs of all employees through collaborative efforts. Its mission is to provide educational services which are customer-focused, accessible, performance based, cost-effective, and which lead to the accomplishment of VHA's organizational goals and objectives of providing quality health care and services to our Nation's veterans. EES's vision is to be the partner of choice for learning.

The Employee Education Resource Centers across the country develop partnerships with employees to provide the education and training they need based on the National Training Priority Areas established by the VHA Integration Council.

To find out more about the products and services provided by EES, visit the Web site at vawww.ees.lrn.va.gov, or contact your local Education Service Representatives.

VHA also offers scholarships administered by VHA's Health Care Staff Development and Retention Office, and reimbursement for tuition. The following list identifies some of the programs you might want to learn more about:

Employee Incentive Scholarship Program: Provides awards for VA employees enrolled in academic degree programs for selected health care professions, such as registered nurse, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, certified respiratory therapy technician, registered respiratory therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse anesthetist, clinical pharmacist, and clinical nurse specialist.

Tuition Reimbursement Program: Supports employees in nursing degree programs and those taking courses required for acceptance in degree programs.

Affiliated Education Programs: Each year, VA provides funding support for more than 2,300 affiliated trainees. VAIHCS maintains an active affiliation with the University Of Illinois College Of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign for both internal medicine residents and medical students, including medical scholars (dual degree candidates). VAIHCS is part of a training program that has 45 medical residents in a three year program. We are also affiliated with the University Of Illinois College Of Medicine at Peoria for residents in family practice. An active affiliation continues with Indiana University School of Optometry for residents in hospital-based optometry. There are also nursing student affiliations for RN and LPN education with 11 different schools. We have affiliations with over 30 institutions of post-secondary education for trainees in associated health care professions. There are numerous programs with these affiliations in areas that include Audiology and Speech Pathology, Dietetics, Dental Hygiene, Music Therapy, Pharmacy, Psychology, Radiology Technology, Social Work and Therapeutic Recreation programs. We have adjunctive faculty with St Louis University, St Louis, Mo; Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI; and Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI; where we lecture to the Physician Assistant student's and they come this facility for clerkships.

[My Career @ VA](#)

The VA brings to you [MyCareer@VA](#) - a powerful career exploration and development resource you can use to manage your career.

Career Transition Assistance Program

A variety of services may be offered to employees displaced by reorganization or downsizing to assist them in transitioning to other careers in VA, in other Federal or state organizations, in the private sector, or in self-employment. Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) assistance typically includes training in job search skills, use of the internet to seek job vacancy information, resume writing, interviewing skills, stress management, and similar related topics. Special programs may be locally available to assist employees displaced due to downsizing.

Education Catalog

Catalog of training offered through your local Education Service;

Link: [Education Catalog](#) Link: [Education Calendar](#)



Veteran's Library and Learning Resources Center

VA Illiana Health Care System has the Veterans' Library and Learning Resource Center located in Building 125 that is staffed with trained information professionals dedicated to providing resources and services to assist Medical Center Staff deliver quality healthcare, advance research, improve competencies, and meet performance goals. We are committed to responding to the emerging educational, vocational, recreational, and therapeutic informational needs of Veterans and their families. A comprehensive array of Staff Education, Patient Education and Medical Media services are offered by dedicated professional employees in Building 125 and 102 who are devoted to providing staff and patient development opportunities, and a full line of media and reproduction products and services. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce new employees and reacquaint some of our tenured staff with all the valuable LEARNING RESOURCES SERVICES we offer!

HOURS OF OPERATION:

HOURS: Monday-Friday, 7:30A.M. to 4:00P.M.

PHONE: (217) 554-3000 Ext. 45605

- 24 Hour Access to Electronic Resources Available at Employee's Workstation
- Computerized Literature Searches Utilizing a Variety of Databases
- Table of Contents Routings of Currently Owned Journals
- Document Delivery Services & Interlibrary Loans
- Tours and Orientations
- Lists of New Acquisitions (Books & Videos)
- Workstations with Internet & VA Intranet Access
- Reference Service
- Access to hundreds of Medical, Nursing, and Hospital Administration Journals
- Education Consults in CPRS
- End-User Database Training
- Continuing Education DVD/Video Collection
- Centralized Purchasing of All Books, Journals (both electronic and print formats), Audiovisuals, Databases, Directories, Pamphlets, Handbooks, and Directories for the Medical Center and CBOCs
- Resumes and USA.Jobs assistance
- Health Education Materials: Books, Pamphlets, DVDs & CD's
- Best Sellers
- Books on CD's

- Free Talking Book Service Applications
- Bus Schedules
- Newspapers and Popular Magazines
- Vocational & Employment Resources
- Recreational Reading
- Ward Cart Services
- Training on Electronic Resources

CALL US WITH YOUR INFORMATION NEEDS!

*Library, x45605

*Patient Health Education Resources, x45567

*Medical Media, x45612 or x45611

*Education Service, x45556

*TMS, Grand Rounds, x45207

*Nursing Clinical Educators, x44306, x43244, or x45017

*Facility Educators, x43364, x44305 or x43229

*For Travel/Tuition Contact, x45600

*Medical Students & Residents, x45556

*Computer Microsoft Office, Share Point, and VA Web Page, x45571

*Duplicating, x45225

For additional information see [Library Letter](#).

VII. Your Awards Program

Performance Evaluation

All of us like to know what tasks we are expected to perform, how well we are expected to do them, and whether our work is measuring up to expectations. As an employee, you need to know these things for your own satisfaction and to help you progress in your job. Your supervisor needs to know them too, for the manner in which you do your work has a direct bearing on the quality of service VA gives to veterans and their families.

To meet these needs, VA has a Performance Appraisal System. The key elements of this system are (1) written performance standards that principally describe the quality, quantity, and timeliness of work and which will be given to you by your supervisor; (2) discussions, as necessary, between you and your supervisor about your job performance; and (3) a formal written performance rating once a year, which is maintained in a separate folder by your service.

Your performance rating is used in making determinations on promotions, reductions-in-force, within-grade increases for GS, FWS and hybrid employees, training, and adverse actions based on poor performance. Should you disagree with the performance rating assigned to you, there are procedures available to have the rating reviewed.

Most Title 38 employees in VHA are evaluated annually under a Proficiency Rating System that addresses their effectiveness in their current assignments and during the previous year of service. The Proficiency Report provides a basis for strengthening employee-supervisor relationships and is a factor in considering employees for advancements within the grade or promotion to a higher grade. It may also serve as a basis for action in cases where an employee's service is unsatisfactory. An employee who disagrees with a proficiency rating may submit comments concerning the rating in writing to the supervisor for filing in the Official Personnel Folder.

You should talk to your supervisor or see your local Human Resources representatives for further details regarding how the performance appraisal systems work.

Further information is also available in VA Handbook 5430.1 and the Question & Answer (Q&A) Guide located at <http://vaww.va.gov/ohrm>, MCM 05-18 Performance Appraisal Program Title 5, and MCM 05-06 Proficiency Rating.

Employee Recognition and Awards

You may receive an increase in pay, cash award, time-off award, honor, or non-monetary award in recognition of a contribution, act, service or achievement that benefits VA or beyond, or for overall sustained performance beyond normal requirements. Overall exceptional performance during the appraisal period (typically 12 months) can earn you a quality step increase (QSI).

VA employees have a number of opportunities to be recognized for their extra efforts on behalf of the Government. Honor or non-monetary awards such as certificates, plaques, and desk items (including paperweights, clocks, and calculators) are used to recognize employee contributions that improve the economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of VA operations and services.

Title 38 employees may be awarded additional steps in their grade as Special Advancement for Performance or Achievement in recognition of exceptional and recognized achievements within their profession. Nurses and nurse anesthetists may also be eligible for cash awards of up to \$2,000 when they have demonstrated both exemplary job performance and exemplary job achievement. Nurses and nurse anesthetists are also entitled to cash awards of up to \$2,000 for becoming certified in specialties related to the accomplishment of VA's health care mission.

In addition to awards for performance contributions, your ideas that benefit VA may earn you cash awards. Through the VA Employee Suggestion Program, VA welcomes your suggestions on how to save time, money, materials, reduce paperwork, simplify procedures, or improve services to veterans. Ideas are submitted on VA Form 3951, Employee Suggestion.

You are encouraged to talk to your supervisor or others who know the subject matter of your suggestion in order to improve your chances of having your idea adopted. Each suggestion is evaluated by a qualified subject-matter expert, and if your suggestion is adopted, you will be eligible for recognition commensurate with the benefits derived from implementation of the suggestion.

Further information is also available in [MCM 05-21 Employee Recognition Awards](#), and [MCM 05-25 Awards for Title 38 Registered Nurses](#).

VIII. Your Rights

Labor Management Relations

You have the right, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, to form, join, or assist a union or not to do so, and you will be protected in exercising this right. However, your right to hold an office in a union, to act as a union representative, or to participate in its management may be affected by the job you hold. An employee cannot represent management in dealing with a union while at the same time representing that union. For this reason, employees who are supervisors or management officials, or who are engaged in human resources work other than clerical duties, cannot hold office in a union, serve as its representative, or participate in its management. These restrictions, however, do not deny the right of any Federal employee to join a union.

If you are in a unit of recognition, you may voluntarily have your union dues deducted from your paycheck. Your local union representative can provide you with further information concerning dues deductions.

If you are in a unit of recognition, an agreement between the union and management will normally have been negotiated to cover some aspects of human resources policies and practices. You should obtain a copy of this agreement and become familiar with its provisions.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

VA employees are encouraged to use mediation to help resolve workplace conflicts as early as feasible, to the maximum extent practicable, and in an appropriate and cost effective manner. Mediation is a process in which an impartial person, the mediator, helps people having a dispute to talk with each other and resolve their differences. The mediator does not decide who is right or wrong but rather assists the persons involved create their own unique solution to their problem. Mediation can be elected early in a dispute when individuals are having problems that they cannot seem to work out on their own. It can be used before putting the problem into a formal dispute process like EEO or the grievance procedure. It can be used after a problem or dispute has gone into the formal process, even while the matter is being investigated, being processed by the Office of Resolution Management, going through the various steps of a grievance, or at a hearing before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, arbitrator, or administrative judge. VA mediators are fellow VA employees who have voluntarily agreed to mediate workplace disputes. They are specially trained and skilled in mediation techniques and conflict resolution. In electing to use mediation, an employee does not give up any other rights. If the mediation does not result in a satisfactory solution, the employee can still go back to the EEO complaint, grievance, or other administrative processes for resolution. For more information about how the mediation program works at your facility, contact your local facility Alternative Dispute Resolution coordinator, EEO Counselor, or a Union Representative.

For more information about VA's mediation program generally, visit the VA's Alternative Dispute Resolution Internet site at <http://www.va.gov/adr/index.htm>.

Equal Opportunity

VA is committed to an aggressive, affirmative policy to ensure equal employment opportunity and advancement to all qualified persons. Federal antidiscrimination laws are followed and enforced. Both the letter and the spirit of equal opportunity are observed in employment, assignment, and training opportunities.

Federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and over), or mental or physical disability. Retaliation against persons who file complaints or oppose discrimination is also prohibited. If you believe that you have been discriminated against for any of these reasons, you have a right to complain to an EEO Counselor within 45 days of the incident giving rise to the complaint.

Contacting the **Office of Resolution Management (ORM)** for counseling is the first step in the pre-complaint process. An EEO counselor will look into your allegation(s) and attempt to resolve your concerns informally. If you are dissatisfied with the results of this process, ORM will instruct you on how to file a formal complaint. Remember that the EEO counselor serves as a neutral party in this process. The EEO counselor does not represent you or the agency. However, you have a right to have a representative of your choosing at any stage in the complaint process.

Further information is also available at the [Office of Resolution Management \(ORM\)](#) web page.

Employment of Disabled Veterans & Other Individuals with Disabilities

VA firmly supports full employment and advancement opportunities for disabled veterans and other people with disabilities. Its continued commitment to this goal is demonstrated through concerted affirmative actions. Selections are based on the abilities a candidate offers, not on the disability, or disabilities, he or she may incidentally have. This policy applies to all opportunities such as appointment, promotion, training and development, and retention.

Whether you are a recent appointee or a seasoned employee, you are encouraged to keep your local Human Resources Management representatives informed of any disability you may have or acquire, and in the case of disabled veterans, of your 10-point veteran preference. This information will help VA determine whether its efforts to provide disabled persons with full job opportunities are actually working. Such information is treated confidentially to ensure your privacy.

The Human Resources Management representative at each VA facility is designated as the Selective Placement Coordinator and should be consulted by any disabled employee who needs assistance in employment matters. The local Human Resources Management representative is also designated as Coordinator for Employment of Veterans and has responsibility for the development and coordination of activities that facilitate the employment of veterans.

IX. Your Responsibilities

General

As a VA employee, you have certain rights and responsibilities. You have the right to expect fair and considerate treatment, decent working conditions, and a sincere concern on the part of VA for you as an individual. In return, VA expects that you will serve diligently, loyally, and cooperatively. You must avoid misconduct and other activities that conflict with your employment; exercise courtesy and dignity; and otherwise conduct yourself, both on and off duty, in a manner that reflects positively upon yourself and VA. Below is a partial list of your responsibilities as a VA employee. For more information, ask your supervisor, your local Human Resources Management representatives, or Regional Counsel.

You are required to be at work every day as scheduled unless on approved leave or excused absence. Failure to notify your supervisor and to request appropriate leave for an absence may be considered absence without leave (AWOL) and cause for disciplinary action.

You must be impartial in carrying out your official duties. You must avoid any action that might result in or look as though you are giving preferential treatment to any person, group or organization. You must not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, sex, religion, national origin, politics, marital status, or disability in any employment matter or in providing benefits under any law administered by VA. You may not make a governmental decision outside of official channels. You may not take any action that impedes Government efficiency and economy, affects your impartiality, or otherwise lowers public confidence in the Federal Government. With certain exceptions, you are prohibited from asking for or accepting any gift, tip, entertainment, loan, favor, or anything of monetary value for yourself or any member of your family from any person or organization that is seeking or has a business or financial relationship with VA. This restriction is necessary to avoid the appearance that your official actions might be influenced by such gifts.

For more information see [MCM 05-07 Employee Responsibilities and Conduct](#).

Conflict of Interest

You must avoid any action that might result in or look as though you are using public office for private gain or might conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interest of VA or the Federal Government. You may not attempt to accomplish indirectly, through your immediate family or otherwise, any action that is prohibited. If you have any doubt as to whether planned actions may result in a conflict of interest with your VA responsibilities, first seek advice from your Regional Counsel Office.

Outside Employment

You may not engage in outside employment or activity that is not compatible with the full and proper discharge of your VA duties and responsibilities. Outside employment activities by certain Title 38 health care professionals are governed by specific VA regulations. To be sure

there is no conflict with your VA responsibilities, check with your Regional Counsel Office before you begin any outside employment activity. For further information see MCM 05-002 Professional Activities by Full-Time Title 38 Employees.

Government Property

You have a positive responsibility to protect and conserve, and not willfully damage any Federal property, including equipment, supplies, and other property entrusted or issued to you. You may not directly or indirectly use Government property of any kind, including vehicles, tools, instruments, or property leased to the Government for other than officially approved activities. You are responsible for all Government property entrusted to you, and you may be held financially liable if it is not treated and used properly.

Debts

You are expected to pay your acknowledged debts and those reduced to a court judgment in a proper and timely manner. Your wages may be garnished for nonpayment of alimony, child support, or other legal debts. Deductions from your pay may also be made for debts owed to the Federal Government. To protect your interest, VA will not furnish information on your credit status, enter disputes over the validation or amount of your bills, or collect for your creditors, except as mentioned above.

Political Activity

The Hatch Act permits some political activities by Federal employees and prohibits others. In 1993, Congress amended the Hatch Act to permit most Federal employees to take an active part in partisan political activities and partisan political campaigns. These Reform Amendments protect your right to register and vote; to be free from official interference or persuasion; and to

express your views on political subjects or candidates for political office. The Hatch Act also protects you from being pressured to make political contributions. You may participate freely in most nonpartisan political activities, such as voter referendums. You may also volunteer or serve as a member or officer of a political organization; campaign for a partisan political candidate or a candidate for political party office; and run for nonpartisan public office. You may not, however, engage in such activities while on duty, in uniform, in any room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties, or using a Federal vehicle.

Solicitations and Sales

You may not solicit contributions on VA premises for any national or local welfare or other kind of campaign unless the activity is endorsed by VA. Further, you may not sell tickets or other articles or services except during an officially endorsed activity of an employee organization, association, or group.

Drug-Free Workplace

VA, along with other Federal agencies, is a participant in the Drug-Free Federal Workplace Program. Testing for illegal drugs is part of VA's comprehensive drug prevention program. Testing may occur randomly in designated positions, or based on reasonable suspicion or in

connection with an investigation into injury, illness, unsafe or unhealthful practice. Employees may also volunteer for unannounced random testing. Counseling and rehabilitative assistance is available to all employees through existing Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). Employees found to be using illegal drugs will be referred to the EAP for assessment, and for counseling and referral to treatment or rehabilitation, as appropriate. Employees who wish to seek assistance voluntarily may do so through existing program arrangements at their facility or through their local Human Resources Management representatives.

For more information see [MCM 05-17 Drug Free Workplace Program](#) policy expectations.

Smoking Guidelines: Smoking and the possession of lighted smoking materials are prohibited in all buildings at VA Illiana Health Care System. Several outside smoking shelters are provided for those who wish to smoke.

Other Conduct

Other conduct matters include prohibitions on the promotion of gambling, betting and lotteries on VA (or any Federal) premises and regulations regarding disclosure or misuse of information; relations with firms or persons seeking or doing business with VA; furnishing testimony freely and honestly in cases dealing with employment and disciplinary matters; and safety.

You should keep yourself informed of conduct requirements since your failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

It is your responsibility as a VA employee to know and comply with the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch. The Code of Ethics, which summarizes some of the most significant points of the standards of ethical conduct for employees of the executive branch, can be found on the inside back cover of this document. A copy of the complete publication is available for you to review from your local Human Resources Management representatives. For general information concerning Federal employee standards of conduct, consult your supervisor or your local Human Resources Management representatives. Within 90 days of reporting to work, all new employees are required to receive an ethics orientation on the standards of conduct. The human resources office within your local facility will explain specific requirements for ethics orientation at the time of in-processing.

Reporting Serious Irregularities and Criminal Acts

You, as a VA employee, are responsible for reporting any evidence or information that gives reasonable cause to suspect that a serious irregularity or other criminal violation may have occurred in any activity of VA. The Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452, Section 7a) authorizes the Inspector General to receive and investigate complaints or other information from any employee concerning the possible existence of an activity constituting a violation of law, rules, or regulations; fraud; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety. It is a prohibited personnel practice to subject an employee to a personnel action if it is in reprisal for cooperating with or making any lawful disclosure to the Inspector General.

Whistleblower Protection

It is also a prohibited personnel practice for an agency to subject you to a personnel action if the action is threatened, proposed, taken, or not taken because of whistleblowing activities. Whistleblowing means disclosing information that you reasonably believe is evidence of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. You are protected if you make such a disclosure to the Special Counsel or the Inspector General. You are also protected if you make such a disclosure to any other individual or organization (e.g., a congressional committee or the media), provided that the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law.

More information on whistleblower protection may be obtained from VA's OHRM Web Site at <http://vawww.va.gov/Ohrm/>; VA Office of the Inspector General (OIG); or Office of Special Counsel (OSC) in Washington, DC, at 1-800-872-9855. OSC was established to investigate allegations of prohibited personnel practices, including reprisal for whistleblowing.

How to Contact the Office of the Inspector General

The Inspector General's Hotline is located in the OIG in VA Central Office, Washington, DC, and can accept toll-free calls between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Eastern Time. Contact may also be made by mail, fax, or e-mail. The Hotline may be contacted as follows:

- Toll-free phone: 1-800-488-8244
- Fax: (202) 565-7936
- E-mail: VAOIG.HOTLINE@forum.va.gov
- Mailing address: Office of the Inspector General Hotline (53E) P.O. Box 50410
Washington, DC 20091-0410

You are urged, but not required, to first discuss your complaints or suspicions with your immediate supervisor or the facility's management, unless you have reason to believe that your own position may be jeopardized.

Privacy

Your work at our medical center will expose you to information, which is strictly confidential and may concern patients, students, employees or members of the central Illinois Community, as well as internal medical center operations. If you divulge any of this information your contract at the medical center may be terminated. Unlawful release of any information could result in prosecution in a court of law and impose a substantial fine (Privacy Act of 1974). The medical center's Privacy Officer Extension is 44943.

Information Security

Information Security Officers (ISO's) are responsible for matters concerning information security policy and they assure compliance with the requirements of laws and directives that protect the medical center from waste, fraud, or abuse. Employees and students will complete Information (Cyber) Security training prior to having access to the computer system.

Ensure computer security by logging off when you leave your computer for any reason, locking your workstation (Ctrl+Alt+Delete), and keeping your desk clean.

Report Suspicious Activity computer theft, inappropriate use of government resources, password compromise, social engineering, removable media, and unsecured technology should all be reported. The medical center's ISO extension is 43134.

DRESS CODE POLICY:

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ILLIANA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
1900 East Main Street
Danville, IL 61832

MCM Number: 05-13

Expiration Date: 5/2015
Issue Date: 5/2012

DRESS CODE

I. PURPOSE: To establish policy, procedure and responsibilities for appropriate on-duty attire and personal hygiene for VA Illiana Health Care System (VAIHCS) employees and others who serve in an official capacity and represent VAIHCS. This includes house staff, trainees, contracted and fee-basis employees, volunteers, work-study employees, and vocational rehabilitation employees.

II. POLICY:

VAIHCS strives to be both an employer of choice and a provider of choice. Every employee and representative should present a positive and professional appearance to the patients and other members of the public we serve. Personal cleanliness, appearance, professionalism and safety are important employee and organizational responsibilities. For this reason, anything considered to be offensive, distracting, or not in the best interest of VAIHCS will not be permitted. Each employee reflects VAIHCS's image.

No policy can anticipate all the potential styles and choices employees may make. The following policy is presented as guidelines applicable to all staff. Due to variation in functioning, such as level of direct patient contact, work environment and safety concerns each service will develop additional guidelines consistent with this policy to assist employees in determining appropriate function and appearance.

III. PROCEDURES:

Guidelines for appearance:

Hygiene & Grooming: Representatives of VAIHCS are expected to be clean and odor-free. Due to close contact with patients and customers, the use of scents and fragrances should be minimal to prevent or create a potential reaction by patients and other staff members. Fingernails must be clean and of a reasonable length. Due to infection control policy and information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), artificial nails (as referenced in MCM 11-40) are prohibited in direct patient care areas.

Accessories: Jewelry will be conservative and reflect a professional appearance. It should not, contain offensive material, or present a safety hazard. Dangling earrings and necklaces should not be worn in patient care areas or around machinery. Political campaign buttons are prohibited.

Name Badges: Name badges provided by VAIHCS must be worn at all times while on duty and in an upright and readable position with the employee's name and picture visible on the upper torso. Business related pins may be worn on the lariat as long as they don't cover the employee's name or picture or pierce any informational media (i.e.: mag strip or bar code). Police Officers in uniform will wear the Department of VA issued badge and name plate in lieu of employee ID badge.

Clothing: Staff are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for their specific job. Employees should consider each day's activities when determining what to wear. Supervisors and managers can specify additional dress and grooming requirements based on the business needs of their departments, or based on safety and health considerations. All attire must be neat, clean and in good condition. Discretion should be used as to length and fit of clothing. Skirts should be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee nor should clothing be revealing. Clothing should not be torn or frayed. Blue denim jeans are not acceptable in the VAIHCS work environment, unless approved by the Director for special events, recognitions, etc. Clothing should not distract from the mission of the VAIHCS, but should promote it by providing a professional atmosphere for patient care. Hats, hoods, or sunglasses are considered inappropriate indoor apparel unless required as a protective measure for the duties being performed or as part of the work uniform.

Shoes: All footwear will be appropriate to the employee's position. The Safety Officer is available to make determinations of safety concerns in specific settings. All shoes, including sneakers, are to be kept clean and neat and appropriate to the work area. Flip flops and house shoes are not allowed. Employees are required to comply with service footwear policies along with the requirements set forth in this policy.

Earphones/headphones: Earphones or headphones associated with electrical devices such as radios, I-Pods, MP3 players and televisions are not appropriate in patient care areas and hallways of the workplace. Personally owned electronic tablets and cell phones are not appropriate in patient care areas. Cell phone use should be used according to MCM IRM-13. These do not promote good communication between patients and staff nor do they promote a safe, caring and professional atmosphere for our customers.

Uniforms: Uniforms will be worn as required by MCM 137-03.

Exceptions to the dress code can be made in certain circumstances. If a medical condition exists, and an employee provides medical documentation from his/her physician stating the length of time and the type of accommodation. Standards of reasonable accommodation will apply. The Director may approve activities or events that allow special items of clothing; i.e., dress down or casual days, holidays, theme attire, etc. For unusual activities such as moving or major cleaning, appropriate accommodations may be made (e.g., blue jeans) by the supervisor of the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for employees with properly

documented religious and/or ethnic needs without undue hardship to the conduct of VAIHCS programs. Requests for exceptions should be made through the Service Chief to the Director.

Responsibilities:

Service Chiefs will be responsible for outlining a service-level policy providing guidance for the type of work performed and the specific type of employees and representative in the work area. Service Chiefs, managers, and supervisors will implement, ensure compliance with, and enforce the provisions of this policy within their respective services and sections. A reasonable person standard should be used in determining adherence to this policy. Managers and supervisors will hold private, personal, and verbal counseling sessions with employees who are not dressed in a reasonable and appropriate manner during their tour of duty.

VAIHCS employees will be familiar with, and adhere to, this dress code and its requirements. All employees must be responsible for their individual behavior as it pertains to organizational policies, procedures, and in support of organizational goals.

Policy Compliance: Employees not appropriately attired for work by the standards of this medical center memorandum or service level policy will be asked to change their attire to conform. If this requires them to leave the medical center, they will be charged with Annual Leave or Leave without Pay until they return. Repeated failure to follow this policy, whether it is offensive, excessively distracting, or in direct conflict with this policy, may result in disciplinary or adverse action.

IV. REFERENCES: VA Handbook 5007 and 5011, 5 USC Chapter 51 and 5 USC Chapter 55

V. RESCISSION: None

Attachment A:

Examples of Prohibited Medical Center Attire:	
Baggy or low-worn trousers exposing any portion of undergarments	Shorts of any type
Overly casual pants, such as pajamas, athletic wear, sweat pants, blue denim jeans, wind suits, and knit yoga pants. Note: Fleece or sweatshirt material zip up hoodies are permissible and not considered athletic wear.	Clothing with offensive logos
Clothing that is seductive or revealing such as halter tops, midriffs or crop tops, spaghetti tops and tank tops	
Examples of Work-Specific Requirements (Service Policies will supplement these examples)	
No open toed shoes in patient care, research, labor and shop areas	
Hair must not exceed shoulder length or must be pulled back when working with patients or around machinery	
Artificial and overlay fingernails are not allowed in direct patient care areas	

Helping you help our veterans.

Doing things right and doing the right things.

VHA has established the Compliance and Business Integrity (CBI) HelpLine in an effort to correct and prevent business errors, thereby assuring that we are serving our veterans ethically and being good caretakers of our communities' resources.

Examples of concerns for which the CBI HelpLine may be used:

- Registration and patient intake
- Medical record documentation
- Medical encounter coding
- Billing
- Self-referrals
- Employment of sanctioned individuals or entities
- Any matter affecting the integrity of the VHA business operations (non-clinical issues)

Utilize Your CBI Officer

Employees should know the CBI Officer at their facility and their role.

CBI Officer Name: Wesley Grimes

Location: Building 102, 124A

E-mail Address: Wesley.grimes@va.gov

Phone Number: 217-554-3135

Employee Decision Process for addressing CBI Concerns

1) Ask *yourself* some key questions.

- Is the action legal and ethical?
- Does it comply with laws and regulations?
- Is it consistent with VHA policies and procedures?
- Does it fit with our organizational values?
- Would you feel good about yourself if you did it?
- Would you be comfortable discussing this with your family, friends, patients, and community?

If you answered "no to any of these questions, you should go to the next step.

2) Discuss your concern with *your supervisor*.

If you are not comfortable discussing this issue with your supervisor, go to the next step.

3) Discuss your concern with a *higher-level manager*.

If you are not comfortable with this, go to the next step.

4) Discuss your concern with *your CBI Officer* or call the **CBI Help Line at 1-866-842-4357. The CBI Help Line is available Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, during normal work hours and each caller may remain anonymous.**

It is VHA policy that no employee will be penalized for raising an issue or a concern.

It is every employee's duty to report potential compliance failures.



CBI HelpLine: 1-866-842-4357 • vaww.vhaco.va.gov/cbi

INTERNET/COMPUTER USE

PURPOSE: MCM 00-30 Internet Guidelines policy establishes information security requirements for access and use of Internet connections (external networks) at the VAIHCS (VA Illiana Health Care System). This policy applies to any individual using VA resources in accessing, using and/or obtaining or providing data. VA resources are described as time, equipment, computer systems, Access Codes, space, telephone, Network, etc.). This includes, but is not limited to employees, volunteers, contractors, medical students, interns and visitors.

VHA's policy is not to restrict the use of Internet connections, but to ensure that adequate protection is in place to safeguard VHA assets from misuse. This policy governs user behavior for access to, and usage of sensitive VHA information systems connected to public networks such as the Internet. The ultimate goals are to protect sensitive data from disclosure or modification, to avoid compromise of VHA Systems and operations, and to protect the interest of VHA users.

All Internet users are responsible for following facility security policies related to access and use of government systems and data. Users are cautioned that what they say or do while on external networks may be interpreted as VA, VHA or this facility's opinion or policy. Users should be aware that their conduct can reflect upon the reputation of this facility and its' staff. Internet access is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct. Listed below are examples of permissible and non-permissible use of external network access.

Internet users:

- Will not be harassing, libelous, or disruptive to others while using government-sponsored Internet resources.
- Will not transmit personal data or unauthorized government-owned data across the Internet.
- All software available on the Internet must be considered potentially dangerous. The software may contain malicious routines, such as viruses which can damage VHA systems. The decision to retrieve software off the Internet must be coordinated with IRM and the ISO, Approval/Disapproval will be made within the context of VHA's need for the software by IRM and the ISO. All software retrieved off the Internet must be analyzed for viruses and for the presence of dangerous "bugs" and features before using. Downloaded software should be isolated on a separate computer for real-time virus detection, scanning and testing.
- Will obey all copyright laws.
- Will not download to government computers from the Internet any written material that can be considered inappropriate in a business environment.
- Will not send threatening, racially harassing, or sexually harassing messages.
- Will not attempt to exceed access privileges or break into any computer whether federal or private.
- Will not willfully circumvent the security features of the automated information systems

or network access systems at this or any other facility.

- Will not use government resources for personal or non-official business.
- Will not introduce computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses or other types of malicious computer codes.

For additional information see [MCM 00-30 Internet Guidelines](#)

IX. Your Safety

Occupational Safety and Health

VA is committed to providing a safe and healthful workplace for all VA employees and volunteers. Each VA facility is required to develop and implement an occupational safety and health program to eliminate work related injuries and illnesses. In support of this program, each

VA employees, students and volunteers must:

- Follow safe work procedures at all times (e.g., wear required personal protective equipment);
- Learn to recognize unsafe conditions or practices;
- Upon identifying an unsafe condition or practice: Immediately correct those which are under your control; or Report them to supervisory personnel;
- Report work-related injuries/illnesses to supervisory personnel;
- Learn about the safety and health requirements that apply to your work;
- Attend safety and health training when scheduled;
- Wear a seat belt and shoulder harness, when available, while traveling on official business; and
- While on travel or assigned to non-VA facilities, learn about local and health requirements and take appropriate precautions to ensure safety and health.

Education Service will provide a monthly New Employee Orientation (NEO) which will include Fire and Safety Training. Anyone unable to attend this training will view this presentation on video within 30 days of entering on duty. Documentation of NEO training will be entered in the TMS Education Training Tracking Program by Education Service.

Supervisors are responsible for orienting new employees to site specific fire and safety information (e.g. fire alarm, fire exits, extinguishers, hazard communication/MSDS, infection control, etc.) prior to assigning work duties. This in-service Fire and Safety Training will be given within a 30 day time frame, but recommended prior to beginning their work duties.

Documentation will be kept in the service and entered into TMS. Site specific new employee training will consist of, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1) Fire safety/response
- 2) Hazard Communication Standard
- 3) Hazardous materials/waste management
- 4) Work site specific training
- 5) Utilities operations
- 6) Universal precautions/Infection control
- 7) Emergency preparedness
- 8) Body mechanics/Proper lifting techniques
- 9) Accident reporting

Law Enforcement & Security

Photo Identification Badges: All individuals must wear a photo identification badge (PIV) supplied by Human Resources Service. The badge is to be clearly displayed while on duty so that patients, visitors and employees can easily identify those involved in their care or service. This badge is to be returned to Human Resources Management on the last day of work. The badge must be clearly displayed while on duty.

Protect your valuables: Bring only the items you need to perform your job. Lock personal items in lockers or drawers to prevent loss by theft.

EMERGENCY NUMBER	Dial 45000
NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER	Dial 45146
24 HOUR CELL	217-799-7520

Always be alert: If you see something or someone suspicious, report it to the officer on duty. Know the people in your assigned area: If someone looks out of place, report him or her so that Police have an opportunity to identify the individual.

Parking: CARPOOLS ARE ENCOURAGED. You are permitted to park in areas designated for “Employee” parking. Do not park in areas designated as “Patient or Visitor” parking. “Handicap” parking is by permit only. [VAIHCS Facility Map](#) [CBOC and other maps](#)

Speed Limit: The speed limit of 20 mph on the grounds and 5 mph in the parking areas is strictly enforced. Please remember to give Veterans and their families the right of way. Remember that many of our Veterans cannot hear or see well, have problems ambulating, or may not be paying attention.

Prohibited Items:

The VA Medical Center is a federal facility and property of the United States Government. It is against Federal Law to bring knives, firearms, explosives, drugs, alcohol, or other potentially dangerous items onto the property. If found in possession of any of these items, you are subject to arrest, fine, and/or imprisonment.

Keys: All VA Illiana Healthcare System staff are reminded to maintain proper security for their government issued facility keys. With the loss of each key the risk of data loss and thefts increase. As of February 2013 [MCM 132-15 Space Key Control](#) has been published and the cost to replace your keys has increased to a minimum of \$25.00 per key or more depending on how many keyways the lost or stolen key controls. The charges represent the total cost of the key blanks, cutting of the keys, new cores, and administrative costs involved. Security of the facility is seriously affected by lost/stolen keys, and as such all key cores operable by the lost key will be changed and all affected keys replaced as soon as possible. The only exception is the 40001 series key also known as the “bathroom key” as security risks for loss of these keys is low. If you have any questions, please contact the Police Service at extension 45146.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines policy for implementing the Prevention of Workplace Harassment Program and reporting allegations of harassment in VHA. To state responsibilities and expectations of managers, supervisors, and employees in preventing workplace harassment in the VA Illiana Health Care System and will not be tolerated. **NOTE:** *This policy applies to all employees and covers employees outside of the workplace while conducting government business, and non-employees while conducting business in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) workplace.*

All facility employees are notified that:

- They are expected to refrain from all forms of workplace harassment.
- Employees engaging in harassing activities are subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
- Persons who believe they are victims of workplace harassment should contact an EEO Counselor in ORM, a union representative if the employee is a member of a bargaining unit, the Office of Inspector General, or the local EEO Specialist. Under certain circumstances, victims of workplace harassment may seek assistance from the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, the Negotiated Grievance Procedure, or VHA's Grievance Procedure. Persons who believe they are victims of workplace harassment on the basis of sexual orientation may not seek relief from the EEOC or file a discrimination complaint under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, Section 703, as amended, because the Civil Rights Act of 1964, does not prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation.

For additional information see [MCM 00-21 Workplace Harassment Policy](#)

Infection Control: What is “Infection Control”? What does it mean to you? The simplest definition of infection control is the prevention of the spread of infection within a health care setting. Infection control is **EVERYONE’S** job.

Responsibility for Infection Control/Prevention is part of everyone’s job! An Infection Control Manual is located in the Infection Control Practitioner’s office. The policies can also be accessed through SharePoint under [Infection Control Committee](#).

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE ASK!

The Infection Control Nurse - ext. 44804

The Employee Health Nurse is - ext. 43186

The Patient Safety Officer - ext. x45412

Patient Rights

The Department of Veterans Affairs respects the rights of the patient and assists the patient in the exercise of his/her rights and informs the patient of any responsibilities incumbent upon him/her in the exercise of those rights.

A full list of patient rights and responsibilities can be found in each patient room, in the Guide to Patient Services, on Patient Rights/Responsibilities Posters in the main hallways, or can be obtained by contacting the Patient Advocate at x45013 or x43131.

Patient Safety

Patient Safety is of highest priority. There is a full-time Patient Safety Manager, who implements and oversees all aspects of the Patient Safety program. Implementation of the National Patient Safety Goals is actioned to appropriate individuals, who have responsibility for compliance and improvement. Intensive resources are allocated for Root Cause Analysis (RCAs), Healthcare Failure Mode and Effect Analysis (HFMEA's), and other Patient Safety activities. Implementation and monitoring of National Patient Safety Goals are an on-going priority. Efforts focus on creating a culture of patient safety by encouraging employees to report adverse events and close calls, participate in analyzing systems, and seeking out solutions that will enhance patient safety. Focus is on systems and processes rather than individuals.

Patient Abuse Policy

It is the policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs and VA Illiana Health Care System that under no circumstances will the physical abuse, verbal abuse, or mistreatment of a patient be tolerated. An inquiry or investigation will be conducted in all instances of alleged abuse or mistreatment of any kind and, where indicated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Any staff or volunteer whom witnesses' unkindness, rudeness, or violence of any type toward a patient must report it promptly. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action. For further information on all of the policies listed above see our Medical Center Memorandums (MCMs) which are available on the Facility SharePoint Site at [MCM Directory](#).

FEDERAL CODE OF ETHICS

Principles of Ethical Conduct for Government Officers and Employees

U.S. OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

1. Public Service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
2. Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
4. An employee shall not, except pursuant to such reasonable exceptions as are provided by regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.
5. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.
6. Employees shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.
7. Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

8. Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
9. Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
10. Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.
11. Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
12. Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those--such as Federal, State, or local taxes--that are imposed by law.
13. Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.
14. Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards promulgated pursuant to this order.

RESOURCE DOCUMENTS/SharePoint Links:

[Instructions on Submitting a Tuition-Travel-CME SharePoint Request](#)

[Travel Site SharePoint Training](#)

[Basic Travel Authorization and Expense Reports](#)

[Setting up Alerts in SharePoint](#)

Sample Travel Request



How to Complete a
Request for Travel-Ti

[What's Up](#) – Web Page with information on what is going on with the Facility – Current Events, Utility/Computer Outages, Announcements, and Education/HR Announcements

[VAIHCS Newsletters](#)

[Business Card Request Form](#) - Form to request business cards, must be approved by your Supervisor

[Trip Ticket Request Form](#) – Request for Government Vehicle Usage

Instructions/Sample on Submitting a Trip Ticket Request – Government Vehicle



Trip Ticket Request -
Government Vehicle.c



VA Locations.docx